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## Redevelopment Board Minutes 02/09/2009

Arlington Redevelopment Board  
Monday, February 9, 2009

Members attending: Andrew West, Chair  
Chris Loret, Vice Chair  
Ed Tsoi; Roly Chaput  
Bruce Fitzsimmons

Also Present: David Berry  
Laura Wiener  
Joey Glushko

Andy West called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. He recapitulated the status of the CVS proposal for 821-837 Massachusetts Avenue (EDR Docket #3348). An informal meeting of the parties on 12/22/08 focused on the historic house next to the church, and on the driveway accessing the CVS building. During the meeting several development scenarios were sketched, moving the building both to the east and to the west on the site. The scenario with the building on the east half of the site was presented at the 1/26/09 hearing session. In this scenario the house is preserved, the access road paralleling Massachusetts Avenue is eliminated and the building is moved to the sidewalk. However, other issues arose with this scenario: the building is very close to the house, while the access drive is closer to the high school access (Carey Drive). West cited the letter dated 1/29/09 from O'Brien to Mary Winstanley O'Connor requesting that the access drive be moved away from Carey Drive and the building be moved away from the house. The letter also requested a plan showing the access drive being located between the building and house.

Andy West then mentioned the two main traffic issues: the location of the pedestrian crosswalks, and the intersection of Mass. Ave. with Jason/Mill Streets. He noted that J. Maxutis of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) had submitted an email and subsequent correspondence addressing the intersection, pedestrian crosswalk, and site access/circulation issues. He will address these issues later.

West invited Phil Henry, the civil engineer designing the site plan, to present and explain the latest site plan. Henry explained that the most recent site plan had been submitted earlier in the day. This plan shows the building located close to the sidewalk (with no drive parallel to Mass. Ave. along the front of the building), and as far east on the site as possible (the east plan), placing it the required distance from the house, from 13' to 14'. The distance of the access drive from Carey Drive is about 92' centerline to centerline. With this layout, there will be an intrusion of about 3' into the required 15-foot buffer along the west property line. Henry pointed out that, even with this intrusion, the town will gain 12' of buffer, since the existing building is on the property line. One objective of the plan is to minimize the conflict of pedestrians with vehicles in the area of the entrance, which is located on the front left-hand corner of the building. Phil Henry said that this plan proposes 6.7% landscaped area within the parking lot, which is higher than earlier plans, but still less than the 8% requirement.

Andy West noted that the 1/29/09 letter requested other layouts and asked if those layouts had been drawn. P. Beck, the project manager representing CVS, responded that the layout with the building as far west as possible had been drawn but this layout presents many of its own issues. West asked if this option had been drawn. Paul Beck responded that it had been drawn. West asked to see it. The plan showing the building to the west was shown (the west plan). Phil Henry explained that this layout provided fewer parking spaces (55) near the front of the building, while resulting in more dead area of pavement, and more paved area, due to the change in the turning requirements for the drive-through window and the truck loading area. Ed Tsoi asked whether the drive-through and loading area could be swapped. Henry explained that there would not be enough space for either to function properly if swapped. D. Constantine, representing CVS, added that the internal layout needs of the building also would prevent the two areas from being swapped.

Henry noted that the west plan results in the loss of 8 parking spaces. Beck noted that the parking for the house, which requires 11 spaces, would not be isolated behind the house away from the CVS entrance as in the east plan; these spaces would thus effectively be mingled among the CVS spaces. Since it would be difficult to police the use of the spaces, CVS customers would likely use the 11 house spaces, since they would be close to the CVS entrance. West thought that this alternative layout would work, but Beck said that it would not work from a parking perspective.

Fitzsimmons submitted a layout that also showed the building as far west as possible, noting that it presented many of the same issues as the alternate now being discussed. Beck noted that Fitzsimmons' plan showed only 23 parking spaces proximate to the CVS entrance. If the house were to be eliminated, then Fitzsimmons' plan might work, according to Beck. Otherwise, to gain the needed parking, the building would need to be moved back from the street, and parking added in front. West noted that there were three rows of parking on the side of the building in both the east plan and Fitzsimmons plan. Beck responded that with the east plan all of the house parking was behind the house, away from the CVS entrance.

Constantine, noting that CVS has tried every suggested layout, emphasized that the plan showing the building to the west could not be done. Beck added that he is trying to work with the Town, but has constraints imposed by CVS management. West agreed that the Board and the applicant must work together, but the Board must see and discuss all of the options.

West asked how many parking spaces were on the two plans. Henry responded that there are 73 on the east plan, and 66 on the west plan, but he reiterated that there is more pavement on the west plan due to the truck turning requirement. Fitzsimmons asked how much more pavement there was on the west plan. Henry did not know, but added that there would also be less landscaped area on the west plan. Chaput asked if there was a landscaping plan. Henry said that the landscaping plan would be done based on a final design, but would be similar to the one originally submitted. West asked how often trucks would service the site. Beck said that there would be one delivery a week during most of the year, with two deliveries per week during the holidays; no deliveries would occur during the night. West asked if the truck could back out, and Henry said that it could not, as that would require losing more parking spaces.

Chris Loret, referring to the original plan (from 9/08), asked if that plan had been approved by CVS. Beck responded that it was marginally acceptable to CVS. Loret asked whether the building on that plan could be moved up to the street. Beck asked what the Board was looking for. West responded that the Board was looking for as much separation between the building and the house, and between the access drive and Carey Drive, as possible. Beck said that the latest plan retains the house, provides space between the house and the building, shows 92' of distance between the access drive and Carey Drive, and moves the building to the street. West noted that the town does not want the "big box" look so close to the old, historic house. Beck said that he does not consider the current design to be "big box".

Loret noted that the landscaped area in the parking lot does not meet the 8% requirement. He asked if the Building Inspector had determined if the other dimensional requirements of the Zoning Bylaw (ZBL) were met. Henry responded that the only one he had checked with the Building Inspector was the distance between the old house and the CVS building; he believed that, except for the landscaped within the parking lot, the other dimensional requirements were met.

West solicited input from the public. R. Radochia asked what the distance was between the building and west lot line on the west plan, and could the building be moved more to the left. Henry said that the distance was 30'; the building could not be moved more to the west due to the requirements for the drive-through. Radochia asked whether the access drive could be moved more to the west. Henry said that it could not, because that would place it closer to Carey Drive. Beck added that an access more to the west might also require eliminating trees along the lot line. Chaput agreed that he would not want to see trees eliminated.

West then asked C. Emilius, the traffic engineer representing CVS, to review the latest traffic report. Emilius referred to the latest report, dated 2/4/09, which presents three options. Option A would place a crosswalk to the east of Carey Drive, and retain the pedestrian signal at its present location; Option B would re-locate the signal about 50' west of Carey Drive; and Option C would

place a crosswalk about 50' west of Carey Drive. Emilius noted that the principal of the high school preferred that the signal remain in its present location. Chaput said that he preferred Option A also, and asked Emilius to explain the charts attached to the 2/4/09 report. Emilius explained that these charts reflect the results of the software program used to model the traffic, showing queues, delay times, and other related data. He added that the distance between cars for modeling purposes is 25' from bumper to bumper. Sam Oftei-Addo, the Town's traffic consultant, also preferred Option A, but was concerned with the crosswalk location between the two busy accesses (Carey Drive and the CVS access drive). He asked whether the CVS access drive could be moved farther east. Emilius noted that not all of the traffic movements into and out of these two accesses would occur at the same period during the day, thus lessening the apparent conflicts. Oftei-Addo noted that there would still be conflicts in this area, and asked again whether the CVS access drive could be moved to the east. Emilius said that with over 90' of separation conflicts should be minimal, but added that the CVS access drive could be moved east a small distance.

Fitzsimmons asked what the best location of the crosswalk would be from a safety perspective. Emilius said that the crosswalk should be between Carey Drive and the CVS access drive for the best safety, especially considering that there would be no parking allowed in the vicinity of the crosswalk, allowing maximum sight distances. Fitzsimmons asked whether the crosswalk could be moved more to the east, opposite the bus stop. Emilius said that crosswalks are not permitted opposite bus stops.

Maxtutis agreed that Option A is the preferred option. Noting that the high school does have activities all day and on Saturdays, he agreed with Sam Oftei-Addo that the CVS access drive and the crosswalk should be moved as far east as possible to maximize their distances from Carey Drive. Emilius expressed concern that moving the CVS access drive to the east might decrease the sight distance there, thus reducing safety. Maxtutis suggested moving the access drive next to the building, as is the case at Stop & Shop. Emilius responded that the parking next to the building is needed.

Maxtutis, referring to the Mass. Ave./Jason-Mill Streets intersection, noted that it is not feasible to include yield control turns. Noting that the Jason Street intersection has the third highest accident rate in town, he suggested moving the island on Jason Street to the west to increase the lanes from about 1.5 to 2 full lanes. Chaput agreed with Maxtutis. Emilius agreed, but said that the conditions at this intersection will not change with the addition of the CVS. This intersection is a major, busy intersection regardless of the CVS, with no quick fix. The Town will have to address it apart from the CVS proposal. M. O'Connor, legal counsel representing CVS, agreed with Emilius, and added that there may soon be another major development near this intersection. She added that the Jason Street intersection would remain a major problem as long as it continues to be used as a cut-through to Route 2.

E. Carr-Jones asked whether more parking could be moved closer to Mass. Ave. along the CVS access. Emilius responded that moving any parking closer to Mass. Ave. would result in cars backing into the internal access lane opening, which is not advisable.

West asked if the TAC would be submitting its formal recommendations after its next meeting. Maxtutis said that TAC would meet on Wednesday and would submit its recommendations then.

For the record, Mary Winstanley O'Connor submitted a memo to the Board dated 2/9/09 further advancing the argument that the pharmacy prescription drop-off and pick-up (the drive-through window) is an appropriate accessory use under the ZBL, because such use has become "customarily incidental" to the main use.

K. Paton, the architect representing CVS, presented simulated photos and elevations of the new building design from various perspectives. Noting that the high school and historical house both exhibited elements of the Federal architectural style, he pointed out that the new building design as shown includes these elements, particularly noting the columns. He also noted the treatment of the windows and glass on the house, again pointing out the windows on the CVS building would be similar, having double hung windows with divided lights over single panes. Finally, he noted that the building is now more in line with the front setback of the church, whereas the original plan showed the building with parking in front, set well back from Mass. Ave.

It was observed that the simulated photos make the building appear farther away from the house than 13'. Loreti asked if there was any front view of the building that shows the house and the church. He also asked if the windows were real. Paton responded that there is no such front view; and added that the windows are real, but will have wooden shutters several inches from the inside of the glass wherever there is any display or other use. Most windows will have shutters only on the bottom half; one window, on the right front of the building, will be completely shuttered to screen a vending machine.

Loreti asked what the height of the gutters would be. Paton said that they would be almost 13 feet above the ground. He added that the front ridgeline will be 35', while the side ridgeline will be 31'. He pointed out that the new design has pitched roofs of varying heights all around, with dormers, bays, and ridgelines. All of the mechanical equipment is to be located in the central area of the roof, or within a "bathtub," hidden within an area enclosed by the pitched roofs. This new design attempts to blend with the current retail nature of the area, as requested.

Loreti asked if there would be one story inside. Paton said there will be only one story, except at the back of the building, where there will be a mezzanine to be used only for storage. Fitzsimmons asked to see a rear elevation, asking whether the truck loading area is a dock. Paton said that there is no loading dock, all materials being loaded at ground level, and brought into the building for breakdown.

Chaput commented that this design is a huge improvement over the previous design, and wondered why this design had not been presented earlier. Tsoi asked if this design exists anywhere nearby for viewing by the Board. The closest example, responded Paton, is in Northborough center. Tsoi noted that the building is still relatively close to the house, and suggested moving the building farther to the west, if possible. Tsoi noted that this new design is much closer to what the Board has been seeking. West added that the variable roofline is good, but the look at the ground level may be a bit too "Colonial village". He suggested a look that is a bit more mercantile or retail, showing as an example the front of the CVS in Andover. Loreti asked about the composition of the siding. Paton said that the siding would be grey-colored, with some being a cementitious product, and some being a tongue-and-groove wood product called "Werzalit". Samples can be provided. None of the siding will show any surface fasteners. These products have long warranties—15 and 20 years.

Chaput asked about the gutters and drainage. Paton responded that all of the gutters drain into the drainage system, which will be engineered as soon as the final design is approved. Loreti asked Tsoi if his previous comment suggested moving the building more to the west, away from the house. Tsoi confirmed this suggestion. Beck agreed that the building could be moved perhaps up to 8 feet to the west, but the Board would have to approve a further waiver of the intrusion into the required 15-foot western buffer. Fitzsimmons supported moving the building more to the west, if possible. Emilius noted that moving the building to the west, might mean moving the access drive to the west also, making it closer to Carey Drive. Such a move might also result in some loss of the parking lot landscape strip in that area. West, using sketching paper over the plan, suggested that the access drive be given a more "boulevard" or substantial street look by adding more landscaping along both sides. Tsoi suggested that the access aisle along the west side of the building could be made narrower if it were one-way into the site, providing some of the additional space between the building and house.

West summarized the next steps of the process. The next plan should provide additional space between the building and house; should re-design the access drive (making it more like a boulevard) and the adjacent internal aisle (making it one-way), as suggested; should move the access drive as far to the east as possible; should provide more drainage detail; should provide a detailed LEED checklist as required by the EDR regulations; and, as noted by Loreti, should show the required bicycle parking. Loreti added that the next submittal should also respond to the final traffic comments submitted by TAC. West emphasized that the revised plans should be submitted prior to the next session of the hearing. Beck confirmed that the next site plan design should be based on locating the CVS building on the east side of the site, next to the house. West asked whether the traffic reports could be re-done to reflect the current traffic recommendations. Emilius responded that the current reports build on one another, and it would be difficult to re-do them all as one document. Beck suggested that an executive summary be submitted instead. The Board agreed to the executive summary. West requested that the lighting plan and the model be updated also. The lighting plan will be updated. Paton noted that it will be time-consuming to re-build the model, and asked if there is any way to avoid having to re-build it. Loreti suggested that the new model need not show the grading, simply show the buildings using Styrofoam blocks, and include all buildings from the bank to the high school. West added that a simulated photo from the front of the CVS building showing as many of the adjacent buildings as possible would be useful.

Loreti asked for the status of the negotiations being conducted on the use of the house. O'Connor responded that negotiations were continuing with the Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA), which was continuing to explore different options. She added that D. Levy of the HCA is continuing to pursue funding for housing. Loreti asked if the house would stay regardless of any future use for it. O'Connor said that a special permit condition to that effect will be acceptable.

Beck determined that the site plan design could be completed and submitted within two weeks, while the model and architectural work might take up to four weeks to complete and submit. Thus, at 9:12 p.m., on motion of Fitzsimmons, as seconded by Tsoi,

the Board voted, 5-0 to continue the hearing until February 23, 2009 at 7 p.m. This session of the hearing will focus on the recommended changes to the site plan and landscaping; the submittal should arrive at the Planning Department by Wednesday, February 18, 2009. An additional session of the hearing was tentatively scheduled for March 9, 2009 at 7 p.m., to focus on the building design; this submittal should arrive at the Planning Department by Wednesday, March 4, 2009. An email will be sent to the Beck reminding him of these deadlines.

The Board then considered the draft minutes of February 2, 2009. Loreti suggested amending them by deleting the parenthetical phrase "less documented site improvement costs" at the bottom of page 2, since the agreement as presented to Town Meeting mentioned only a cash payment, and the Board later agreed to accept in-kind payments up to the same amount. Bruce Fitzsimmons moved to approve the minutes of February 2, 2009, as amended, and Roly Chaput seconded the motion. The Board voted 5 to 0 to approve the minutes as amended.

The Board briefly discussed the Selectmen's letter to the state Department of Conservation & Recreation on the Alewife Greenway project. Loreti expressed his disappointment that the Board did not have the opportunity to review the submission as had been previously agreed with the Selectmen. This letter had apparently been sent to DCR on Friday, February 6, 2009. Berry will confirm that the letter had been sent, and obtain a copy, if sent. Loreti requested that the Board be provided a copy of the latest DCR plans for the greenway.

Staff asked if the Board had any questions on, changes for, the ZBA Docket #3356 for a special permit use proposed for 22-26 Sunnyside Avenue. Loreti had two comments that he conveyed to Glushko, who had drafted the report to the ZBA.

The Board scheduled the public hearing for the zoning warrant articles for the upcoming advertisements must appear no later than the February 26 and March 5, 2009 editions.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kevin J. O'Brien

Approved 3/16/09